

NASB State Board Candidate Questionnaire 2026



Darin Tompkins – LD 36

1. **Local Control** - With so many decisions from the legislature impacting local boards, NASB is interested in your view of local control. Regarding education, what decisions do you feel are best made at the school board level vs. the State level?

I support local control for school boards. The state should be concerned with how best we can fix our funding structure to allow local school boards to lower their levy.

2. **School Funding** - Every year the legislature makes decisions about the way schools are funded, making predictability of funding a challenge. What changes and/or adjustments, if any, do you think the Legislature should address?

As a former executive director, I know how important consistency and stability are when it comes to the budgeting process. We cannot expect our communities to be able to reduce tax levies if they cannot rely on a proper funding structure. The legislature should work to stabilize the support for local school boards and ensure an equitable funding structure.

3. **Role of Education in the State** - What role do you think PK-12 Education plays in the future success of the State and your community?

PK-12 education has everything to do with the future success of our State. Making sure the next generation of Nebraskans has the education, the tools, and the experience they need to be successful when they start their careers is essential to the economic development success of our communities. We need to do what we can to help expand STEM education and career technical education training so that our students can hit the ground running when they leave K-12.

4. **Educational Workforce** - Educational workforce continues to be a challenge across the State from teachers to bus drivers. What would be your plan to address this challenge?

I would like to identify the specific issues so that I can work with you to develop a solution. We can all agree that teachers and support staff should be more fairly compensated for the work they are putting in every day to support our students. It should be the legislature's responsibility to support our staff at all levels of government and make sure they are compensated well and have good benefits so that we can attract the best teachers to our state.

5. **Mandates** - School districts continue to be challenged by the increasing unfunded mandates put upon them by the State and Federal government. What is your response to mandates and the State's role in them?

We should not burden local governments with unfunded mandates. If the legislature wants to get a job done, they should take the responsibility of funding it themselves without passing the burden onto local governments to figure out how to pay for it.

Final Thoughts

We face many challenges in education throughout the state, from the funding structure to school safety, but I think it is important to recognize that we do a lot of things right. My wife and I are proud of the Gretna and Millard Public Schools systems that our kids graduated from, and I know our community takes a lot of pride in the quality of our schools. This is exactly why I am running for office; to build our state up and leave it in a better place for my kids and the next generation of hardworking Nebraskans. We cannot do that without a strong public school system that sets our students up for success in the workplace.

How can voters contact you?

tompkinsfornebraska@gmail.com